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THE Jesuites [illegible]

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TO A

LETTER

WRITTEN BY A

MINISTER,

ENTITVLED,

Lying allowable with PAPISTS *to deceive* PROTESTANTS.

LONDON,

Printed in the Year 1679.

THE Jesuit's Plea.

In ANSWER to a LETTER Written By A MINISTER, ENTITULED,

Lying allowable with PAPISTS *to deceive* PROTESTANTS.

I Should be extreamly unjust, if I in the least doubted sincerity in the solemn Asseverations of the late Executed *Jesuites* at *Tyburn*, for I must suppose them either *Atheists*, or no *Atheists*; if *Atheists*, What would they not have done or confessed to save their Lives? for in that supposition their *Summum bonum* would have been the pleasures of this life. If not *Atheists*, they either acted at their Death according to Conscience, or against Conscience; if against Conscience we must believe that they wittingly went about to damn themselves without remedy, dying in Perjury known to themselves as such, to Judge this is very uncharitable,

if they acted according to Conscience, professing Innocency for what they were Condemned for, and yet were guilty; then were they the most grosly ignorant, or of the weakest Capacity or Judgment of any that ever were Executed, and proceeded by palpable Contradictions: they must have believed a God, and not believed his Essence, nor believed his Essential Verity; For he cannot believe God to be essential Verity, who believes that he can Authorise a Lye; wherefore whosoever calls God to Witness a Lye, and acts according to Conscience, grosly and palpably contradicts himself, and to Judge this of the *Jesuites* would argue gross folly and ignorance in any knowing Person, and reasonable Creature: in more Circumstances could have dared to appear immediately before the Throne of the Eternal, Great, and All-seeing Judge of the Living and the Dead, as it were glorying in the most Uncharitable falsities that ever were pronounced by Men. If Criminal, did they not in vindicating themselves Arraign and Condemn the Law and Common Justice of the Nation, and with Vanity, Countenance, Perjuries, Infidelities, and Treasons against both King and Kingdom, the blackest of all Crimes? Can you believe they should think God can comply with any, or to be deceived in any Circumstance? is it not most detestable to his Nature? is not in the greatest ill, and from the only ill, and God the greatest Good, and the only absolute goodness? Sin a negation of all goods, a *non Entity*, a want of all due rectitude in any action done, and *malum per se*. God goodness it self, and perfection it self. The *Essence* of *Existence* as he defined himself in Scripture *Ego sum qui sum*, the only absolute being or entity, from whom it emanes or flowes to all Creatures: What then more oppo-

site than God and Sin? Were it not then Sacrilegious to avouch that God cannot be displeased with a Creature when he sins, or that he can approve a Lye? Besides, if a Lye were in any Circumstance to be allowed by God, it would argue deficiency in God, as that any thing should be possible to be compassed out of the Sphere of Divine Activity, by assistance of the Divel the Father of Lies; Nor could his Omniscience be less questionable, as reasonably imputing to it an ignorance of effecting his designs, but by the unjust ways of iniquity; likewise would his Providential Goodness and Justice be censured, as allowing sin the *medium* to obtain Heaven, nay himself who is the end of all Righteousness; This is Blasphemy, and to Arraign God in all his Attributes; this is so absurd, that it will be folly to spend more time in this Argument; or to believe it possible, that Men whose Educations and Breeding have been in Schools, should be either so ignorant as to hold such silly Opinions, or so wicked Christians as to seem to believe the highest Crimes damnable, and Sacrilegious Lyes, Perjuries, Treasons, and Blasphemies, as meritorious Virtues, alleadging God as Witness in justification of such infernal Acts, horrid to every Christian Ear, abominable to Common sense, opposite to the very light of nature. And that this is not only according to the Doctrine of St. *Paul* alleadged by *Harcourt*, that *no ill is to be done, that good may come thereof*; but is also the Doctrine of the *Jesuites*; You may learn from Father *Berry* an eminent *Jesuite*, and modern Author, in his excellent Book called *The Solitude of Philargie*, approved by Authority, and not called in again as *Mariana's*, and was wrote for the practice and daily Meditations of all sorts of People, where to express

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the malice of Sin, he says that *it were better that the Angels were annihilated, and that a little World perish, than to offend God by the least Sin, even of an idle word*; this constituted, the inhumane expressions of your Paper no ways touch me, nor is my amazement, as yours, grounded on their Proclaiming themselves innocent (for if so, then to manifest it publickly to the whole World upon so solemn an occasion, was but Justice to others, as well as to themselves) but at your not crediting such pregnant circumstances, as your belying and slandering the Dead, and your guilty detractions which I believed inconsistent with the Principles of Christians, and therefore admire it in the practice of a Christian Minister.

Scripture and all true Morality teach us, to do as we would be done unto, to Judge no otherwise of others than we would be Judged by others; and I thought it the Principle and due practice of every Christian to make the best exposition of the Words and Actions of others, to make the charitablest Interpretation words will bear, especially the words of dying men, delivered with Christian Courage, Modesty, Resolution, and Constancy, and not Spider-like to suck venome from sweetest Flowers. Can you believe they proceeded so maliciously at the hour of Death? I have so much Charity for you, as to think, that were you under the same Circumstances as they were when they pronounced their Speeches, immediately expecting Death, not then to be tempted by any Allurements of Pleasure, Greatness or Fortune, not capable of Worldly Advancement, or vainly regarding the consequences of Eternity, you would abandon such rash Judgments, even of the worst of Men, and conclude it a time to be serious, and not to use Quirks and Equivocations to deceive,

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or impiously to hide truth. Now as to what you alleadge to prove, they might well be guilty, for all their Protestations to the contrary is very frivolous. *We must believe* (say you) *that every of them received plenary Absolution of all their sins, from their Birth, to this day, upon which Absolution they may affirm themselves as free from, and as innocent of any Crime laid to their charge, as the Child unborn, because whatever the Crime is, 'tis forgiven.* So not to count you very malicious, I am forced, as the less evil, to think you very ignorant. Where did you ever read in any *Cathol.* Author, that after Absolution for any Sin, the Penitent might think himself as innocent of it as the Child unborn? How then can he swear it? who knows not that when by the Prophet 'twas declared to *David* that his Sin was forgiven him, yet he was not so innocent, but that God punished him afterwards temporally for it, as in Scripture is declared? and who knows with such certainty as is requisite for an Oath, whether he had a due Disposition necessary to Absolution? *No Man knows whether he be worthy of Love or Hatred from God*, is the sense of the Scripture, and Doctrine of the Catholick Church, and that we must work our Salvation with fear and trembling, with Christian humility, and not presumptive confidence. Moreover should it be granted, that Absolution before hand might justifie that expression of being as innocent as the Child unborn, yet could it not justifie Mr. *Whitebread*, saying, that *to pray to God to bless his Majesty, is all the harm that he ever intended or imagined against him, and that he never did learn, teach, or believe, that it is Lawful upon any occasion or practise whatsoever to design or contrive the death of his Majesty, or any hurt to his person*; Mr. Harcourt saying, *We hold it*

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in all Cases unlawful to Kill or Murther any person whatsoever, much more our lawful King. Mr. Gavan, *I do attest that I never in my life did machine or contrive either the deposition or death of the King.* Mr. Turner, *I never accus'd my self in confession of any thing that I am charged with.* Mr. Fenwick, *I know nothing of it,* (*viz.* Of plotting the Kings death) *but what I have learned from Mr.* Oates *and his Companions, and what comes originally from them.* Mr. Langhorn, *I neither am, nor ever was at any time, or times guilty, so much as in my most secret thoughts of any Treason, or misprision of Treason whatsoever.* These sayings, even supposing a Revelation, that Absolution has taken away all guilt, so as to render them as innocent as the Child unborn, cannot be allowed without having been ever innocent of the fact charged against them; for even the absolute power of God cannot effect that not to have been which was, nor could their Absolution take away their memory, or allow them to declare they knew not that which was in their memory. But say you, *If they sinned in that their declaration of Innocency, yet they might safely do it, having a power to absolve each other just as they were going out of the World, as I believe they did when they laid their heads together.*

Sir, Give me leave to teach you again what is the *Catholick Doctrine*, for I find you have very gross mistakes therein. Observe then Sir, That there is not one *Catholick* nor Christian Author I believe extant in the World, that holds it sufficient to have the words of Absolution pronounced over him, but that then is requisite in the Penitent *a real aversion, detestation, or turning away in his heart from sin*, and *conversion to God*, to render him a fit or disposed subject to receive the effect of Absolution; Is it then likely

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that any Christia should be so presumptive at the hour of his death, as wilfully to sin upon confidence of such disposition immediately after, knowing that his sorrow must be from a supernatural motive, and not in his power, but by the grace of God whom he then offends? this is certainly the highest presumption imaginable, and not to be paralled. What Sinner knowing he had but three Moments to live, would make use of two to offend God upon confidence of the last? Who can think so meanly of God, as to imagine him so subservient to Man, as that he as it were may lure down from Heaven supernatural grace at his will and pleasure? who has that faculty to love and hate the same thing so immediately, as if the one were a disposition to the other its contrary, and not Sin the punishment of preceding Sins, but grace as a reward? How stands this with that place of Scripture, *Neque volentis neque currentis sed miserentis est dei?* What more absurd and wicked than such proceeding, or more nonsensical and uncharitable to suppose it, not only in any learned Christian, but even in any illiterate *Mahometan?* this is to bid farewell to all Charity, Religion, Reason, Prudence and Common sense. But say you, *If to Rob, Spoil, kill Protestants, burn their Cities, and depose Kings, be no sin, but good and lawful, then they might declare themselves innocent, though never so guilty, for* Romanists *tell us 'tis no sin to take from those they count Hereticks all they have.* For this you cite the *Lateran* Council, *sub Innoc.* 2. and *Sylvester N.* 23. *Q.* 3. *Cap.* 1. First in Answer to it, we must distinguish betwixt the Articles of Faith declared in Councils, and the Constitutions of Government or Laws; The first are *unalterable, infallible,* and *irresistable,* the other *fallible, alterable,* and *resistable,* and may be suspended

ed, and abrogated, and are so upon fundry occasions. For example, the Counsel of the Apostles Condemned that Doctrine, holding Circumcision necessary, this Article of Faith can never be opposed, but the Decree they made against *eating of strangled meats and blood*, became quickly of no force, and is now wholly abrogated.

Secondly, The Canon Laws so farr forth as they relate to temporals oblige, or are in force only there, where they are received, or approved by the temporal Authority of the Kingdom, Principality or State (and where do you find the Three States of *England*, the antient and present Government of this Kingdom, consenting to depose Kings for Hæresie, or to dispose of their Lands, &c.) and such Canons must be formally promulged there by the Governing Authority in due method, otherwise they are of no validity; this is seen by the Councel of *Trent*, which though it be received throughout the Catholick World as to its Decrees concerning Belief, or Articles of Faith, yet as to, in other Canons, or Constitutions of Government, is in some places wholly rejected, in other places in part received, in others wholly. And this Kingdom when Catholick in part, rejected the Canons of the Third Counsel of *Lateran* for making *Children legitimate after Marriage, born before*, saying *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*. So that upon the whole matter it implies no more, then to say that any King, Prince, or State may make or agree to such penal Laws against Differers in Religion, as they in prudence shall think fit, and so may either take, or reject the advice of Pope or Councel.

Thirdly, That Canon of the *Lateran Counsel* was made against the Subordinate, and Fuditary Princes of *Germany* and *France*; as the Prince of *Bearn*, Earl

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Comings, the Earl of *Foix*, and the Earl of *Tholous*, who then countenanced and abetted the *Albigenſes*, the Emperors of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt*, the King of *France* and moſt Kings thereto conſenting by their Ambaſſadors, and their Authority uſed to ſuppreſs thoſe *Albigenſes*, and to prevent diſſention and rebellion in the Empire of *France*, and other Kingdoms; this was the motive of that Canon which begins, *Si Dominus terræ*, &c. not naming *Kings*, *Emperors*, or *abſolute Princes*, but *inferior Lords*, nor *Kingdoms*, but *Lands Terras*, and not *Regna*.

Fourthly, Were ſuch a Canon in force in *England*, yet could not ſuch a Law be executed againſt the King, who was never denounced Hæretick, nor any perſonal Excommunication pronounced againſt him, or was ever heard, or admoniſhed by Pope or Counſel (the ſame may be ſaid of all the Proteſtants in *England*) ſo that I ſay, were any ſuch Canon admitted, even by Act of Parliament, or Conſtitutions of this Kingdom, it would not reach his Majeſty nor *England* as guilty.

Fifthly, Though I ſhould ſuppoſe contrary to truth, that ſuch a Canon did reach the King and this Kingdom, yet could it not be executed by private perſons, no more than a Jeſuite or Prieſt can by a private Perſon or Authority be hang'd, drawn, and quarter'd: He or they muſt be firſt publickly Tryed, and legally Condemned and then Executed only by the appointed Executioner; that Canon then doth no ways Impower or Authorize in the leaſt any perſon living, Jeſuite or other, to perpetrate thoſe Crimes you mention, wherefore upon many demonſtrative Reaſons, thoſe aforementioned Crimes muſt by all be accounted or denied horrid, and unchriſtian, and no one can juſtly declare him-

ſelf innocent who hath committed them. Next as to your proving it lawful by Dr. *John Dun-Scotus, &c.* To Swear with Equivocations upon juſt Cauſe, makes not at all to your purpoſe nor what you alleadge of *Bonnacina*; For the Jeſuites in their laſt Speeches tell you with great Aſſeverations that they make uſe of no Equivocation, mental Reſervation, *&c.* Nor from thoſe Authors can it be proved, that any one may Swear contrary to the ſenſe the words properly bear, but all you can deduce is, that in words Amphilogious, doubtful, or of two ſenſes, I may ſwear to that ſenſe I think the truth, though it perhaps be underſtood in another ſenſe by him that hears me; and this only upon a juſt cauſe (as *Abraham* did about *Sarah* his Wife, calling her his Siſter) which he there explains.

The Jeſuites proteſted they ſpoke in the plain ſenſe the words bear, and averred it with great imprecations, and I believe you, nor any body living, can find any proper, or other ſenſe to their words, but that of Innocency: and I did hope with *Fenwick*, *That Chriſtian Charity would not have let you thought, that by the* laſt Act *of his life he would caſt away his Soul, by ſealing up his laſt breath with a damnable lye*; Were not this greater want of Charity, than to ſay, He that dies an obſtinate Hæretick cannot be ſaved. The uſual Objection againſt *Catholicks*.

In the next place you cite *Soto*, ſaying, *Mendacium ſi non habet, &c. A Lye, if it have no other malice than that of falſehood, it is no mortal ſin*? What is this more than to ſay, every Lye is not a mortal Sin; for every Lye has the malice of falſhood; and doth this argue, or can any one deduce from hence, that no Lye is a mortal Sin; that a Lye that has beſides the malice of falſhood, the malice of prejudice or wrong

wrong to my Neighbour, a falſe accuſation of another by proteſting my own Innocency with a Lye, or to lye with perjury and imprecations upon falſhood, can any infer from thence, theſe not to be mortal? and ſuch had been the Lyes of the Jeſuites, were they guilty of what they were accuſed. Laſtly, You ground your calumny upon theſe words, *Certum eſt obligationem hujus præcepti*, &c. *It is certain that the Obligation of this precept* (to conceal what is reveal'd in Confeſſion) *in no Caſe, and for no end, even the defence of the Commonwealth from very great ill, either Spiritual or Temporal; can be violated or broken*, to this you alleadge *Durand*, *Scotus*, and many more. What of all this? did the Jeſuites, if guilty, know of the Plot only by hearing the Confeſſions of others? If ſo, they could not be Actors in it, as they were accuſed to be, and Condemned for; where do you find a Precept of not revealing or owning my own Actions, although I had confeſſed them before? Now give me leave here (mention being made of this Precept) to ſhew you that this Precept is ſo far from being of any ill conſequence to any Kingdom, as that on the contrary, 'tis very advantagious, a great hindrance, and no incouragement to Treaſon. Whoſoever Sacramentally confeſſeth Treaſon owns it a Crime; the Prieſt that has a precept of concealing it, has alſo a precept not to abſolve him unleſs he heartily repent, and if the Treaſon be only intended, he muſt indiſpenſably require him to deſiſt from ſuch intention, he muſt with all poſſible diligence exhort him to deteſt ſuch Intention or Treaſon in his heart, and to diſcover his Complices, if he have any, as in Conſcience he is abſolutely bound to do, here is Confeſſion by the admonition and direction of the Paſtor and Spiritual Phyſitian of his Soul (who hereby

hereby knows the Diſeaſe and State of his Soul) a great means to his Spiritual Cure, to caſt out of his Heart all Treaſonable thoughts, and to prevent the Actions, but if there were not that precept of ſecreſie, who would conſeſs to be Accuſed and Impeached? 'Tis Confeſſion that is the great ſecurity of all Catholick Kingdoms from Treaſon; for when any guilty in fact or intention come to this Sacrament. they are preſſed to declare their Complices, and obliged to retract and hinder what is not effected therein, knowing they cannot be Abſolved without it, whereby moſt Treaſons are timely prevented. For this Reaſon we find that ſucceſs in Rebellion againſt Government, has commonly been joyned with Rebellion in Religion, as pretended Reformation in Religion and Rebellion againſt their Sovereign, ſet up together in *Holland*, and in ſeveral Principalities of the Empire; whereas Catholicks, remaining ſuch, contradict by Treaſon their own Principles, and muſt acknowledge ſuch practice damnable; wherefore had the Jeſuites been guilty, you would have had from them an acknowledgement of the Crime, as done or acted contrary to their Conſcience and Principles of their Religion; but 'tis no Principle of any Religion to accuſe ones ſelf falſly. Wherefore wonder not that they ſhould rather dye profeſſing Innocency to the Crimes objected againſt them, with hope of Salvation and Pardon of God for all their real Offences, than to live by his Majeſties Pardon with falſe accuſation of themſelves and others, and diſpleaſure or anger of God. And I muſt not wonder to find their Words and Speeches ſo miſrepreſented, whereas even the Word of God is dayly traduced by falſe Gloſſes, to the ruine of many. And what wonder that thoſe Five

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Jesuites, and many more, though never *so Loyal* have been thus Condemned, and Executed as Traitors to his Majesty. Where by pretended Justice and course of Law, one of the best of Kings has been Condemned and Executed as a Traitor to his Country. By thus suffering they have as Christians imitated Christ, and as loyal Subjects imitated their King *Charles* the First, God bless King *Charles* the Second. **Amen.**

FINIS.